

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for dynamic access decision information retrieval, the method comprising:
 - receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies one or more entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;
 - determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information items;
 - retrieving the given entitlement information item from the information provider, wherein the step of retrieving the given entitlement information item includes generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider;
 - forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items;
 - and
 - returning the ~~container~~ response to the application.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - caching the retrieved given entitlement information item in a local storage.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - identifying a cached entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information item; and
 - retrieving the cached entitlement information item from a local storage.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the cached entitlement information is in the form of a container.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the request includes a plurality of information items, wherein the step of determining an information provider includes determining a given information provider for each one of the plurality of information items to form a plurality of information providers, and wherein the step of retrieving the given entitlement information item includes:

generating a retrieval client for each one of the plurality of information providers to form a plurality of retrieval clients, wherein ~~the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider~~ each one of the retrieval clients retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein ~~the retrieval client~~ each one of the retrieval clients generates a protocol module to form a plurality of protocol modules, and wherein ~~the protocol module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider~~ each one of the protocol modules retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with using a provider specific protocol that is compatible with the given one of the information providers.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein ~~the retrieved given entitlement information item~~ entitlement information retrieved for all of the retrieval clients is in the form of a container.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the application is an access manager that is operatively coupled to a web server that receives entity requests from the entity across a network.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the access manager includes a rules engine.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 8, wherein ~~the response is an extensible markup language document~~ entity is a user, and wherein the user contacts the web server to obtain a service therefrom.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for dynamic access decision information retrieval, the apparatus comprising:

receipt means for receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies one or more entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;

determination means for determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information items;

retrieval means for retrieving the given entitlement information item from the information provider, wherein the retrieval means includes means for generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider;

forming means for forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and

returning means for returning the ~~container~~ response to the application.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:

means for caching the retrieved given entitlement information item in a local storage.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:

means for identifying a cached entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information item; and

means for retrieving the cached entitlement information item from a local storage.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the cached entitlement information is in the form of a container.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the request includes a plurality of information items, wherein the determination means for determining an information provider includes means for determining a given information provider for each one of the plurality of information items to form a plurality of information providers, and wherein the retrieval means includes:

means for generating a retrieval client, wherein ~~the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider~~ each one of the retrieval clients comprises means for retrieving entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein ~~the retrieval client~~ each one of the retrieval clients generates a protocol module to form a plurality of protocol modules, and wherein ~~the protocol module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider~~ each one of the protocol modules retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with using a provider specific protocol that is compatible with the given one of the information providers.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the ~~retrieved given entitlement information item~~ entitlement information retrieved for all of the retrieval clients is in the form of a container.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the application is an access manager that is operatively coupled to a web server that receives entity requests from the entity across a network.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~[[11]]~~ 18, wherein the ~~response is an extensible markup language document~~ entity is a user, and wherein the user contacts the web server to obtain a service therefrom.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a computer program product tangibly embodied therein, wherein the computer program product is operable in a data processing system, ~~in a computer readable medium,~~ for providing dynamic access decision information retrieval, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies one or more entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;

instructions for determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information items;

instructions for retrieving the given entitlement information item from the information provider, wherein the instructions for retrieving includes instructions for generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider;

instructions for forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and

instructions for returning the ~~container~~ response to the application.

21. (Original) The computer program product of claim 20, further comprising:
instructions for caching the retrieved given entitlement information item in a local storage.

22. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 20, wherein the request includes a plurality of information items, wherein the step of determining an information provider includes determining a given information provider for each one of the plurality of information items to form a plurality of information providers, and wherein the instructions for retrieving the given entitlement information item include:

instructions for generating a retrieval client for each one of the plurality of information providers to form a plurality of retrieval clients, wherein ~~the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider~~ each one of the retrieval clients retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with.

23. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the retrieval client generates a protocol module and wherein the protocol module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider using a provider specific protocol.

24. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the retrieved given entitlement information item is in the form of a container.

25. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 20, wherein the ~~response is an extensible markup language document~~ entity is a user, and wherein the user contacts the application to obtain a service therefrom.